

## More of the mystery Behind the Bolted Door?

Continued from page 7

Fisher apartment. Just one word was readable, up in the left-hand corner of the page—in good big advertising type. That word was M-U-N-D. The paper looked like the cover of a magazine. And because *mund* is a German word you'd better try the German book-stores first of all. See if there's a copy of a magazine in town with M-U-N-D in big letters up in one corner."

"Well!" said the Judge. "Well! At any rate, you sound professional enough. And what's the answer?"

"Bishy, if you won't mind too much, I don't believe I'll tell you."

"What?"

"I don't believe I'll tell you. Because probably I'm wrong. At the start, at least, I'll probably be wrong four times out of five. Yesterday you were just Lawyer Bishop, an old friend. To-day you're District Attorney of the city, and it won't help a lot to gum you up along with me."

"All right, Laney, whatever you think. It's just as you say."

"But there's something I can tell you"; and Laneham's tone became almost solemn again. "It's practically certain that the awful voice we heard in there was the same that sent my hurry call."

"No?"

"No question. I've just heard from Miss McCollum—in my lower office, you know. The call came in to her. The words used were simple enough: I was merely to come at once. But she says the voice was one she'll never forget. She imitated it for me."

"My Lord! But, at any rate, that's something learned."

And they went up to the Casa Grande together.

THEY went, first, because they had to attend the coroner's inquest.

It was the customary inquest, too. It called attention to the obvious and shut its eyes to all that was not. But it at least made it possible for the poor body to be removed. The funeral was to be on the morrow, from the Fisher country place at Greenwich. And after the inquest Laneham and the Judge again moved out to the corridor together.

"Well, Laney, what now?"

"Till further notice it's the butler, Jimmy. But first I must try to put myself right with McGloynne."

"McGloynne! The saints help you! Now that he knows you even have official credentials, he'll eat, sleep, and live to keep you from getting anything."

"Maybe so; but I must play the game."

In his pocket and on his conscience was the murder note he had picked up in the apartment. He pulled it out as he walked and glanced at it again. At the top, in fine, clear script:

We have now reached the point where it must be either murder or suicide.

And beneath, in the writing which Judge Bishop had identified as Mrs. Fisher's own:

Couldn't it be made to look like an accident?

What did it mean? Whose hand, so well trained, so unshaken, had penned the fatal lines at the top of the sheet?

If the big Chief of Detectives showed the first sign of reciprocity, he intended to show that note to him. And, with all the tact that was in him, he began to explain himself.

He told McGloynne that he had been asked to help in the case simply because of special medical and psychopathic knowledge. His only desire was to be useful; perhaps they might be able to help each other. And, for his part, he wanted to ask now if the Identification Bureau had as yet given anything—on either the Fisher butler or Maddalina, the maid?

It was rather a long speech. And McGloynne waited, half staring at him, till he had finished. Then, without answering, he laughed, turned away, and began to talk to one of his lieutenants.

The insult was gross enough, but only as a last resort did Laneham intend to go over his head to Bishop or the Commissioner. It still remained to be seen just how far the big Inspector's powers extended.

BEFORE an hour was over he might well have decided that they amounted to something very like complete blockade.

He wanted a set of floor-plans, both for the Casa Grande and the Casa Reale, its annex. Though without either door or elevator connections, both were simply halves of the same building. And he made his request at the renting office.

He was refused, absolutely—"under orders just issued by the Detective Bureau."

He tried to talk to one of the house men. Did he know, asked the Doctor, whether Jimmy, the butler, had any friends? Would he recognize them if he saw them?

The man would not answer. He too had had his orders. And they were orders that had mentioned him, Laneham, in particular.

He went to the woman across the court, a Mrs. Deremeaux. It was she who had heard the argument in Mrs. Fisher's apartment that afternoon, and the voice crying "See! See!" and "No, no, no!" Would she know the voices of the Fisher servants?

But Mrs. Deremeaux, too, had been warned: she refused to speak a word.

There was still the matter of tracing his hurry call. And, visiting the local telephone exchange, he showed his credentials and asked to see the record. They had it, of course?

"Oh, certainly. But they were very sorry, there was an order against it."

"An order?"

"Yes, and it had just been repeated. But no doubt he could get the information he wanted by going where the order had come from."

"Which was—?"

"Why, of course, the Detective Department."

"All right," he told himself. "It's about time, in any case, that I was trying something from what Bishop calls my own bag of tricks."

And, back at the Casa Grande, he went first to those private rooms of Professor Fisher's. Apparently he wished only to look again at the fireplace where he had found the paper ashes. But they were gone now; all had been swept clean.

He turned, and, following the corridor, went on to Mrs. Fisher's rooms. Whatever his object there, it took him through the library where, the night before, the two Central Office men had begun turning out the drawers of Mrs. Fisher's old Washington desk.

They were now at it again. They were opening bundle after bundle of her correspondence. And at one side they had piled the yellow indexed boxes of what was evidently a sort of little household-accounts filing cabinet.

It was that, indeed, which brought the Doctor to a halt.

"If you're after stuff on the high cost of livin'," said one of those "C. O.'s,"—and there was a jeer in his voice which said that here, too, Laneham had been expected.—"there's a bunch o' evidence there."

"Thanks," responded the Doctor.

Picking one of the yellow files from the heap, he began to leaf it over.

It contained what any one would have looked for in it—the receipted bills of butcher and baker, of florist and decorator.

Yet, when Laneham put it down, he took up another. Then, on a sudden, his



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